



US Army Corps of Engineers
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Corps, North Carolina to cooperate in study of Tar River

Wilmington, North Carolina—The State of North Carolina and The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers signed a Feasibility Cost Sharing Agreement to examine a variety of potential flood reduction measures in the Tar River Basin, especially Princeville, which suffered record floods during Hurricane Floyd. “We are very pleased that the State Division of Water Resources has decided to commit funds to this important project in what we know is a tight budget year,” said Col. Charles R. Alexander, Commander of the Wilmington District. “We can soon begin some of the basic research on hydrology of the river basin and regional economics that are needed.”

The state has committed \$60,000 for this budget year, which the Corps will be able to match with an equal amount from the \$1.5 million in federal funds already committed to the study. The three-year study project is cost-shared between the state and federal government on a 50-50 basis.

The investigation, formally named the “Town of Princeville, North Carolina, Feasibility Study” will undertake to determine the feasibility and economic viability of a number of possible measures to reduce flood damages along the Tar River, including not just at Princeville, but also for nearby Tarboro and upstream cities like Rocky Mount.

The options that will be studied include:

- Modification of the Princeville Levee
- A high-flow bypass channel or floodway to divert flood waters away from communities
- An upstream reservoir or reservoirs to control river flow and provide flood damage reduction as well as water supply and recreation benefits
- Modifications to bridge and railway structures or the river channel

The Corps must also evaluate a ‘no action’ option and the possibility of relocating communities vulnerable to flooding. “We are required to evaluate these options, though we know that Princeville and the nearby community of Speed have made firm decisions not to relocate,” said the Corps’ project manager, Al Bjorkquist. “We also will be giving full weight to the tremendous historical significance of Princeville as the first community in the nation founded by African Americans.”

“We are pleased that the study gives us the breadth of scope we need to look at options that provide the fullest possible water resources benefits in the Tar-Pamlico Basin,” Col. Alexander said. “Last week’s Revisit to Princeville sponsored by the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation did a great job of highlighting the need for infrastructure development as a foundation for economic stability and prosperity in rural Northeastern North Carolina. A river system that supports and sustains healthy ecosystems and also brings benefits to people is truly at the heart of this or any region’s economic viability. We’re proud to be part of the great effort to vitalize this part of North Carolina.”